

Wisconsin Shares for Children in Out-of-Home Care Placements

In Wisconsin Shares, the term 'parent' includes foster parents, kinship caregivers, a person acting in place of a parent, and custodial and natural parents. **The following information applies only to eligibility and authorizations for children who have been placed in out-of-home care; it does not apply to the biological or adopted children of the placement parent.** Please note that families with out-of-home care placements are not exempt from verifying their own income and approved activities.

Eligibility

- *Financial Eligibility:* Financial eligibility for foster families, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and kinship caregivers who are receiving the Kinship payment is first based on the natural parent's income, which is tested at 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); if the natural parent income exceeds that limit, financial eligibility is then based on the caretaker household income and is tested at 185% FPL.
- *Non-Financial Eligibility:* Each adult in the household must also participate in an approved activity such as employment, a W-2 placement, education, etc. Applicants must provide a Social Security number for all children who need child care assistance. Visit dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/eligibility for more information on eligibility.

Authorizations

You will receive a Notice of Decision stating whether or not you are eligible for Wisconsin Shares. If eligible, the next step is to contact your local Wisconsin Shares agency to request an authorization. You must be ready to tell the agency worker which child care provider you will be using. For resources on choosing a child care provider, visit dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/parents.

The agency worker will collect approved activity schedule(s) and a child care need schedule. These schedules are entered into a computer system that compares the schedules and only authorizes for the overlapping times when all caregivers are in an approved activity and child care is needed. **Wisconsin Shares will not issue an authorization to a provider for child care services when the child care provider lives with the child.** Child care providers who live with a child who is receiving Wisconsin Shares may apply for a waiver to send their child to another child care provider.

There is a process in place to help get child care authorizations as soon as possible. If you anticipate a child placement, or if you are waiting to apply for the child care subsidy until after you receive the Kinship Care payment, you can sign a [Wisconsin Shares Child Care Registration](#) form with your Child Welfare agency. When the child is placed with you or you are approved for a Kinship Care payment, your Child Welfare agency will submit the form to the local Wisconsin Shares agency to get your application started. If you are not currently receiving Wisconsin Shares, and have not signed the Child Care Registration form, please speak with your licensor, the child's caseworker, or your contact at the child welfare agency for Kinship Care.

The Cost of Child Care

The Wisconsin Shares authorization may not cover the full cost of child care; you may be responsible for paying any difference between the subsidy amount and the provider's bill. The Wisconsin Shares copayment is an amount that is reduced from the subsidy amount. Placement parents will not see a copayment reduction to the subsidy amount, but the cost of child care may exceed the amount of the subsidy benefit. That difference is the responsibility of the placement parent. For more information, visit dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/parents.